WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Prices of Natural Rubber

*68. SHRI RAM BADAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the prices to natural rubber;

(b) whether it is proposed to fix the administered prices of rubber during July-August each year; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). Government has been announcing revision in the Bench-Mark Price of Natural Rubber (RMA-4 grade) based on the cost study report of the Cost Accounts Branch of the Ministry of Finance which makes its recommendations taking into account the increases that have taken place in the cost of various inputs for production of natural rubber. The present Bench Mark Price of Rs. 21,450/- per metric tonne was fixed on the basis of the recommendations of the Cost Accounts Branch on 15th January, 1991.

On the advice of the Ministry of Commerce, the Cost Accounts Branch have now conducted a fresh study and submitted their recommendations. These are being processed in consultation with all concerned authorities and it is too early to indicate details in this regard.

[English]

Decline Exports

*69. SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI:

SHRI BIJOY KRISHNA HANDIQUE:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether exports in the first seven months of the current financial year have declined as compared to the corresponding period of the previous financial year;

(b) if so, the percentage of decline in dollar terms and the reason therefor:

(c) the export made to General Currency Areas and Rupee Payment Areas during the current financial year in comparison to the previous financial year;

(d) whether the export targets for 1991-92 have been achieved;

(e) if not, the reasons for shortfall therein; and

(f) the steps proposed to be take to boost exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). India's exports to the General Currency Area amounted to US $ 8567 million or Rs. 20095 crores during April-October 1991 as compared to US $ 8118 million or Rs. 14239 crores during April-October 1990 thereby registering a growth of 5.5% in dollar terms and 41.1% in Rupee terms. India's exports to Rupee Payment Areas during April-October 1991 amounted to US $ 951 million or Rs. 2229 crores as compared to US $ 1988 million or Rs. 3487 crores during April-October 1990, thereby registering a decline of 52.2% in Dollar terms and 36.1% in Rupee terms.

Government are of the view that exports to GCA countries and RPA countries should be disaggregated and viewed separately.